1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

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It is rare that a request is refused. Excuses have to be invented. Property, in consequence, changes hands very rapidly, especially if it is anything novel. The stuff a man receives at a ceremonial exchange or festival is sometimes begged off him when he gets home. Prizes are not much of a reward, as they may not remain in the winner's hands more than a day.

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The government discourages begging and an anti-begging league was founded in 1905. The custom found a champion in the Native Gazette (11, July, 1905):

> This Fijian custom is not wholly bad; it is well merely to correct it. What is Fijian begging? Begging is the requisition (*lala*) of the common folk. See, the commons in Fiji cannot make requisitions; for requisitions are the chief's part. But what are requisitions? Requisitions are begging on a very big scale; they have not ceased, but are allowed by the law. Well, the commoner has begging as his only requisition. It is plain as day moreover that there is not much begging without return. If you come and beg my lamp because you are hard up, presently when I am hard up for clothes I shall beg some of you: so my lamp will be paid for. According to Fijian custom it is hard to refuse, because it represents paying, or trading, or the mutual aid of kinsmen. It is plain also that there are men who are humbugs (i.e. who don't play the game, but abuse the custom), because that is the way of the world. That is the end of the argument, now turn to the evil of forbidding people wholesale to beg, as you are doing; the chiefs, they are free to go on putting levies upon us but then we are undone by it since we are forbidden to beg. Who is the commoner to approach you nobles and say, "Please pay me, Sir, for what I have done, or for the food I have brought," or whatever it be? Impossible. If your requisitions cease, your calls on us (*mata*) your proclamations, your pomp (*vakaturanga*), then will begging cease.
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> There are two forms of begging in Fiji. One is begging without return after the fashion of chiefs, that is bad and should be given up. But there is also a begging when in want which is payment for work and other things, and it is right and expedient to preserve it. But it looks as though you were prohibiting both, that we commoners may die twice in consequence we shall be made to work and it will be forbidden to us to beg in return. The ancient times were better than now. The carpenters built canoes; they worked without pay inasmuch as it was a requisition on them; they were fed while it went on, and they delivered the canoe. The feast of the workers (*otho*) was finished, but there was still to come some reward. Wait till you see some stuff in the possession of the chief; they will go and beg for it.

The Fijian is shrewd. Under an appearance of lavishness he counts the cost of everything, and if, at a ceremonial exchange for instance, he does not receive the full value of what he gave, he will take the balance in prestige and admiration. If a man cannot make a full return in kind for what he has begged, he will be under an obligation and have to do all kinds of services for his neighbor. The critics of Fijian begging all reason *a priori*. The facts are there to prove that the practice does not work as they think it should. As a matter of fact, the hard worker is always better off for his rank than the lazy man, and more influential, unless he is a man of no personality who does all the work of the clan and does not exact

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1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

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all they would willingly give him in order to retain him. Joshua and his brothers were the hardest workers among the nobles; Joshua had the largest house next to Big House, and built for his brother Isoa the finest home for size and decoration combined; by hard work and forcefulness he had attained an importance quite out of proportion to his real rank. Nowhere have I found hard work to be so esteemed as in Fiji.

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

551 (Ship-of-Tui Naiau), Thamailawathi (Outrigger-of-Lawathi), Lembaikelekele (Necklace-of-Kelekele).

Koroi, Seru, Wangga are names given to one who has slain an enemy. Thama and Lemba are given on the grounds of kinship, and to inferiors. A man may call his younger brother's son Thama after his own son. Lawathi and Thamailawathi were both sons of Ndranivia, but by different mothers; the mothers, however, were sisters, and younger sister's son was called after the elder sister's son. Lemba is given to women in the same way; a *lemba* is an "after-eater" or younger sister. "If two brothers have daughters the daughter of the younger is *lemba* to the daughter of the elder. Lemba and Thama are used only for our inferiors."

Nicknames are called *yatha ni vakathivo*. *Vakathivo* (to lower) is the custom of shouting out some humorous remark after drinking a cup of kava; a nickname is therefore properly a name given at a kava party. One boy was nicknamed Silini (Shilling) and another Penitolu (Three-pence) because as a small child he had put three-pence in the collection plate; another was supposed to look like a billy goat and so was called Tamanime.

A man addresses his namesake as My Name, in Fijian this is *nonggu yatha*, whereas a man speaks of his own name as *yathanggu*, using the suffixed possessive. "If two men have the same name," says one informant, "they are related." Of course, it is generally because they are related that they have the same name, but a common name does seem to bring them closer together, and people sometimes speak as though having the same name were a close tie. I could, however, get nothing definite on the subject beyond the following example: Pasoni, a Tongan, is related according to Tongan custom to Repeka, because his father was born when her father, Leonaitasi Ngu, was in Tonga and so was called after him.

The people are reluctant to mention their names, and, if compelled to ask the name, will do so most politely. When asked his name a man will usually request a third party to tell it for him.

553 The father, mother, and grandfather decide upon the child's name. The naming is not accompanied by any ceremony, except of course for the Christian name which is given at baptism. If, however, a man wants to give his name to a child he brings gifts for the assigning of a name (*me i vakatoka ni vatha*).

ADULTS

461 577 A hard worker is described as a man who achieves things; a lazy man is unable to achieve food or goods. Such a man is liable to have it flung in his face at the first quarrel. Hard work is very much prized, and a man's

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

capacity for work almost invariably takes the first place in a description of his character. Salesi thinks that formerly bravery was most thought of; now it is straightness (*yalo ndonu*); but people also like *manggosa*, which is combined skill and care in work.

The best way to get the people to work is to divide them into two teams and pit one against the other: the effect is miraculous; it transforms a rabble of slackers into two groups of enthusiastic workers. This spirit of rivalry is called *veinggati* or *veikati*.

Rivalry

This leads to one of the most far-reaching traits in the Fijian character. It extends not only to work, but to dancing, and anything in which it is possible to outdo others, especially munificence. A reputation for meanness (*yalondrendre*) is perhaps what a Fijian dreads most. Generosity, for which, strangely enough, there appears to be no name, is a gentlemanly trait.

The fear of getting a bad name is the foundation of Fijian ethics. A certain nobleman was said to spend all his money on his people in order to get a good name. The good name of a clan or village is as carefully upheld. If a clan fails to provide enough food for a feast it gets a bad name.

A Fijian is very sensitive to public opinion, a sensitiveness expressed by *mandua*. This word covers such emotions as shame, bashfulness, shyness, shamefacedness, prudishness, constraint, delicacy. It makes ridicule, insult or defeat hard to bear. It is especially strong in the relations of inferiors to superiors, of young to old, of nobles and elders towards one another. It makes men ashamed at a ceremonial blunder by one of their number, but it also makes them reluctant to put him right; it makes them loth to haggle, or to argue; it makes them awkward in asking for a favor; it makes them distant with their parents or elder brothers. The following is an instance to what a point they carry their sense of delicacy: I received a bill for ten shillings intended for Vola; I passed it on to him and heard nothing more about it until one day he remarked of the sender of the bill, "He knows our ways well; that is why he sent the bill to you. We agreed on five shillings as the fare, but he knew that if you saw the bill I should be ashamed to haggle, and would pay." Salesi preferred to sell his copra to a certain man because he weighed it in silence, whereas the others talked nicely to him while weighing, so that if the weights were wrong he was ashamed to protest.

They are as quick to seize upon the ridicule in others as they fear it in themselves. Number upon number of the Native Gazette contains a letter relating with great zest some blunder, as that a man pursued a shadow on

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

Na wesi (spear dance) chanted by Tatchini of Kambara 575

Takiva na ika ni wai ndrondro,	They catch the fish in the current, 539
Kithoka na ika somi lolo,	They spear the fish at high tide,
Ndua a theva urea mo.	A southeast wind begins to blow.
E sa urea sa lutu koto.	When it blows there is no chance (to fish).
Raunama nongguo.	The fishermen turn homeward.
Kena wai tambu nda vakarorongo,	The sea becomes still,
E tumbu a tha kau nggai ndrondro.	Then it swells as I go back (to the beach).
E ruru a tha kau sunggai koto.	So I go home and the storm abates.
Koi au a wai vuni rongorongo.	I listen to the secret of the sea.

Volau, a *meke* master of Namuka, creates new dances of the following 575
types: *seasea, vakamalolo, meke ni malungu* (club dance), and *meke iri* (fan dance). He was born on Oneata and his father was born on Matuku, which, according to the natives, is a *meke* making center. When the people of Namuka want a new *meke* they present kava to Volau. He accepts the kava and in the evening it is prepared. On the first or the second evening, while he is drinking kava, the god comes to him and he expresses the words, the rhythm, and the movements of a *meke*. He teaches it to the people, who must learn it quickly because Volau forgets it immediately.

ECONOMIC LIFE

PROPERTY

Land Scarcity

Scarcity of fertile soil is a basic factor in the economic life of the south- 311
ern Lau Islands. On the limestone islands the supply of garden land is fixed and limited. Practically all the garden land that can be profitably cultivated is in use. On the volcanic islands, the supply of fertile land exceeds the demand.

On Kambara all the best land (*nggele ntchina*, true soil) and some of the 241
second grade land has been cleared and is used for gardens. In years of 311
normal rainfall the supply of garden produce remains more or less constant, and garden production is only slightly below the needs of the population. New land is rarely cleared because the natives think it will not repay the effort. They believe that extensive cultivation of more second grade land might increase production somewhat in years of normal rainfall, but that in dry years there would be a shortage of food regardless of how much land was under cultivation. They think that more intensive cultivation, by native methods, of the land already cleared would increase the yield sufficiently to 241
supply their needs in normal years with less labor and more profit. However, 311
several factors work against intensive cultivation. First, the dislike which the 461
nobles feel toward work on the land has had an effect upon the whole popula-

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

241 311 461 tion. Many men consider garden work arduous and tiresome and spend as little time as possible on their gardens, preferring to spear fish, sail, or do carpenter work, or to do nothing. Others work sporadically. Second, unequal distribution of the garden land reduces the output. Some clans, especially those in the land phratry, own two or three times as much garden land as others. If a clan is rich in land and poor in man power, at least part of its land is neglected through lack of labor, even though some of it is occasionally lent for cultivation to another clan. On Kambara the clans Vuanikathu and Nawi, both of which lack young men, own more land than they use. Matasoata and Tanggu are poor in land. Third, the *kerekere* system (pp. 207-208) discourages conscientious work on the land.

241 461 The headman of a prominent clan on Kambara owns good garden lands, which he cultivates with great care and patience. His crops are large with a relatively high yield per acre and he always has enough food. His garden produce is constantly solicited by relatives. In fact, the headman's industry has slackened that of his relatives. One day he told me that during the past three days 20 baskets of sweet potatoes had been stolen from his garden. [674] He knew the thief was a relative but did nothing about it because if the theft were exposed the prestige of the clan would suffer.

Industrious individuals are rare but they enjoy high social prestige. If one member of a clan has a good crop and food is needed for a birth, marriage, [553] or death feast within the clan, he is expected to contribute the bulk of his produce. If he does not do so, he loses prestige. One young man of Undu had the only yam garden on Kambara and had given it great care. While he was absent from the island toward harvest time, his grandfather died and his clan consumed the yams in the death feast.

On Wangava, claimed by Naivotavota clan, Kambara, only a small part of the best garden land is utilized. The gardens have been deserted because of fear of evil spirits which bring illness. But, aside from this fear, one clan cannot furnish the labor necessary to take full advantage of its natural wealth and other clans hesitate to solicit land on a spirit-infested islet.

On Fulanga, all the land which will yield even a meager crop is under cultivation. All possible garden lands have long been cleared and the supply is fixed. Intensive methods are uniformly employed and production is just about at the maximum under native methods. Garden work is so difficult that every man who harvests a crop must be industrious. Though Fulangans work much harder than their neighbors, part of their food must be collected from the bush and imported. The land situation on Ongea is similar to that on Fulanga except that the food problem is not so acute.

Namuka and Mothe have more than enough food. Only part of the best, fertile land of Mothe is used for gardens, which yield large crops with a

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

minimum of effort. Little new land is cleared, though clearing land on the forest-free, volcanic islands does not require the labor involved in clearing the thick jungles of the limestone islands.

Land Ownership and Inheritance

A government land commission is engaged in the difficult task of surveying the land in Fiji and establishing native land titles. Fortunately, at the time of my visit the commission had not reached southern Lau and titles to the land had not been disturbed or legalized. However, land ownership is complicated by the changes made in the system of ownership after the Tongan conquest of the chiefdom of Lakemba. Moreover, there is rivalry between some clans regarding land ownership, especially if there is any doubt as to claims. The genealogical method was found invaluable in working out problems of land ownership and inheritance.

The land is divided into three classes: garden land (*nggele*), village land (*yavu*), and bush (*lekutu*). Natural demarcations—trees, rocks, and creeks—are used to define boundaries.

The hamlet system of land ownership (p. 35) is clearly seen on Mothe. The somewhat circular island, rising gradually from the shore lowlands to a central ridge, is divided into pie-shaped sections, extending from the center to the shore. Each section is owned by a clan and bears the same name as the clan. The sections contain hamlet sites, which the natives claim were formerly occupied by the proprietary clans. Even today, although all the clans live in clan-hamlets in the two adjacent villages of Nasau and Korotolu in south Mothe, the old divisions are observed, each clan confining its gardening, collecting, trapping, and fishing to its own section. Each clan also owns its own hamlet site within the village.

Under the Tongan system the garden land and the village lots were owned by the clans, and the bush was free. Fishing rights in the lagoons were divided between the villages adjacent to them. The Tongans did not change the ownership or the names of the garden and village land. The land was measured in fathoms by using a piece of sennit (*mangimangi*). According to informants, a piece of land was called *mangimangi*. For instance, land belonging to the Vuanikathu clan was called *mangimangi ki Vuanikathu*.

The Tongan system may be illustrated by the land division on Kambara. The garden lands of several clans form a geographic unit and every clan division has a name. The clan garden land as a whole has a name. The clan village land forms a unit unless the old division has been obscured by the expansion of the village or the clan. This is also named. The clan land is administered by the clan headman. There is no fixed rule regarding the division of the clan land. It is usually divided between the subclans. Plots

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

464 As a matter of fact the natives do not tend to congregate in large numbers in commercial centers such as Suva and Levuka. [484] They like to travel about the Fiji group and visit their relatives. [574] Many of the young men leave their villages on labor contracts on copra plantations in Taveuni or other parts of Fiji for several years, but in time nearly all of them return to their own villages to settle and cultivate their lands. The majority of Fijians are peasant farmers who possess their own land, and cultivate only enough to provide for their food and a small surplus of copra or bananas to exchange for trade articles such as cloth, soap, tobacco, and kerosene which have become necessities. They can, through their own efforts, raise enough produce to cover their personal needs and taxes, usually about £2 a year, and practically nowhere is it necessary for a native to hire himself out by contract. When this is done it is usually to cover expenses which the community has incurred for the sake of increasing its social prestige or improving its resources —such as building a cutter or new water supply. In fact, in at least 50 per cent of the villages visited in Lau, practically all the young men between the ages of eighteen and thirty were away for a year on labor contracts, earning money to pay a debt incurred by the district. A few young men from southern Lau are employed as sailors aboard trade or government cutters. Their families live either in their home villages or in Suva.

461 Protection of the natives against competition with other racial groups in the modern economic system has its dangers as 178 well as its advantages. Just as the elimination of warfare has tended to sap vitality from the culture, so also shielding the people from the economic struggle, which would otherwise destroy them, has tended to weaken them. The natives are inclined to become lazy and self-pitying. In the Lau islands, for instance, there is a definite distaste for work on the land, especially among the nobles. This is due partly to a traditional prejudice, and partly also to the very real difficulties of

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

working the soil. It tends, however, to discourage attempts to improve gardening technics and it also tends to keep the population at subsistence level. Instead of devising ways of acquiring a surplus of food, by means of production or trade, to be fermented and stored against drought or hurricane, the natives feel they need not bother since the government will come to their aid with rice and flour in case of hurricane or famine. Hence the chief administrative problem regarding the land in southern Lau is how to stimulate interest and initiative in cultivating the soil. This problem will be discussed in the next section and in Chapter VII.

In parts of Fiji desirable for settlement, the government policy of protection of native lands has made possible the development of a class of native landlords who live idly off the rents from their lands. It has also had a marked effect on the economic development of the colony, for many native owners of commercially valuable land refuse to lease any of their holdings, even though they actually use but a small part for their gardens or plantations. The difficulties of acquiring land for settlement have been so great that they have actually discouraged or prevented settlement.

The deadlock over land in Fiji has been the serious concern of the administration for many years. In an attempt to meet the problem the great council of chiefs, which met in 1936, passed the following resolution: "That in the opinion of this Council it is to the best interests of the native race that all lands (including leases) not required for the maintenance of the Fijian owners be opened for settlement; that to further this end a committee be appointed to inquire into and determine the amount of land needed for the proper development by the native owners; and that all land (including leases) not so required be handed over to the government to lease on behalf of the Fijians."[33]

The acceptance of this recommendation by the legislative

[33] *Annual Report*, Fiji, 1936, p. 59.

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

food and washing clothes for the Sunday ceremonies and feast, and Monday is a day of recovery from the Sabbath. Tuesday and Friday are reserved for work on the gardens, and Wednesday is used for other activities including care of the village and houses.

The mission church requires a quarterly tithe from each member. When the copra industry was at its height, this tithe was paid in money, but was being paid in produce when we visited Lau, for after the slump in copra there was very little money in the southern islands. This obligation, as well as the native tax imposed by the colonial government, makes further regular demands upon the industry of the people.[36]

The growing demand for regularity in economic life conflicts with native psychology. The Lauans, as well as most non-westernized peoples, have a natural rhythm of work which differs fundamentally from the mechanical regularity imposed by a machine age civilization. They prefer to work and work best at irregular intervals interspersed with frequent rest periods, ceremonials, and feasts. This tendency toward irregular work rhythms is counteracted to a certain extent in Lau by the daily recurring problem of subsistence. At the same time even in this difficult environment the natives manage, by living at a minimum level of subsistence, to adhere to their preferred tempo.

The attempt to regulate the work habits of the natives was but one result of the gradual penetration of the principles of western economy into the group. Another was the introduction of western trade articles. Trade in imported articles focused the essential differences between the native and the western economic systems, especially regarding exchange of goods. Both the early missionaries and the government officials frowned upon the native soliciting system. Soliciting

[36] In 1933-34 the usual government head tax of £1 and the provincial tax of £1 per year were not required of the natives of Lau province on account of the low price of copra and the limited resources of the group.